

CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY.

LIFE OF

MRS. MARGARET BAXTER.

WRITTEN BY HER HUSBAND,

REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

LONDON:

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,

Instituted 1799;

SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW;

AND BY THE BOOKSELLERS.

Printed by J. Rider, Little Britain, London.

LIFE OF

MRS. MARGARET BAXTER.*

I. Her parentage and conversion.

“THOUGH due affection make me willing to give the world a narrative which else I had omitted, yet the fear of God hath not so forsaken me, that I should willingly deliver any falsehood through partiality or passion; but, as I knew more of this person than any other, for the good of the readers, and the honour of God’s grace in her, I shall, by God’s assistance, truly report the things which I knew.

“That which is left out of the narrative of my wife’s life, is the occasions and inducements of our marriage, and some passages between some relatives and her, which the world is not concerned, yet at least, to know.

“If this that is written seem useless to any, it will not hurt them, if they leave it to others that find it more suitable to them. All things are not agreeable to all: that may be useful to persons of her own quality, which is not so to many others. To her nephews, and nieces, and some other kindred, who were also near to her, and for whose sake, above most others, I write it, you cannot think that it will be altogether useless. O that they would all imitate her in all that is praiseworthy and needful to themselves. The grand objection I foresee will be, that I seem but to predicate some of mine own good works by praising hers. And must I needs bury the memory of them as hers, for fear of the sting of such objectors? I have told them truly,

* This edition of her “Life” is abridged from that originally published by Baxter himself.

it is not my own acts, but those that were properly hers, that I there mention.

“She is gone after many of my choicest friends, who, within this one year, are gone to Christ; and I am following even at the door. Had I been to enjoy them only here, it would have been but a short comfort, mixed with the many troubles which all our failings and sins, and some degree of unsuitableness between the nearest and dearest, cause. But I am going after them to that blessed society, where life, light, and love, and therefore harmony, concord, and joy, are perfect and everlasting.

“Reader, while I give thee but the truth, forgive the effects of age, weakness, and grief. As the man is, such will be his thoughts and works. The Lord prosper our preparation for our great approaching change! To leave this world for ever, and enter upon an endless life, where we shall speed according to the preparations of this little inch of time, doth certainly bespeak the most serious thoughts, the wisest and speediest care and diligence, the most patient suffering, the most unwearied labour, the most frugal use of all our time, the most resolute resistance to all temptations, and, to the faithful, the most joyful hopes.”

“We were born in the same county (Salop), within three miles and a half of each other; but she of one of the chief families of the county, and I but of a mean freeholder, called a gentleman, for his ancestor's sake, but of a small estate, though sufficient. Her father, Francis Charlton, esq., was one of the best justices of the peace in that county, a grave and sober worthy man, but did not marry till he was aged and grey, and so died while his children were very young.”

“In her vain youth, pride and romances, and company suitable thereto, did take her up; and an imprudent rigid governess, that her mother had set over her in her absence, had done her hurt, by possessing her with ill thoughts of strictness in religion; yet she had

a great reverence for some good ministers, especially Mr. Thomas Wright; and she thought that she was not what she should be, but something better, she knew not what, must be attained.

"In this case, coming to Kidderminster for mere love to her mother, she had great aversion to the poverty and strictness of the people there, glittering herself in costly apparel, and delighting in her romances. But in a little time she heard and understood what those better things were which she had thought must be attained.

"And a sermon of Mr. H. Hickman's, at Oxford, much moved her, on Isaiah xxvii. 11, 'It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not save them,' &c. The doctrine of conversion, as I preached it, as shown in my treatise of conversion, was received on her heart as the seal on the wax. Whereupon she presently fell to self-judging, and to frequent prayer, and reading, and serious thoughts of her present state, and her salvation.

"A religious maid that waited on her, taking notice of this, for she kept all her matters so secret to herself, as was her great hurt all her life, acquainted her mother with it; and, when it would be hid no longer, but her frequent closet-prayers were sometimes over-heard, and her changed course of life discerned, her mother, who, as far as I could discern, before loved her least of her three children, began to esteem her as her darling; and all her religious friends and neighbours were glad of so sudden and great a change.

"I will here give you one of her self-judging papers, which I find since her death, upon her then sad convictions. When I had, on Rom. viii. 9, told them how it may be known whether we have Christ's Spirit or not, she thus repeated the signs with her self-condemnation:—

"Mark 1.—The Spirit of Christ is the Author of the

scriptures, and therefore suiteth your disposition to it, and guideth you by it.

“ Judgment 1.—‘ I fear then I have not the Spirit of Christ; for I yet feel no love to God’s word, nor closure with it as suitable to me, but I am questioning the truth of it, or, at best, quarreling with it.’

“ Mark 2.—The Spirit of Christ is from heaven, from God our Father, and leadeth us upward unto him. Its work is spiritual, of heavenly tendency, making us cry Abba, Father, and working the heart by uniting love to God.

“ Judgment 2.—‘ It is not so with me; for I have a spirit tending only to selfishness and sin.’

“ Mark 3.—The Spirit of Christ uniteth us to Christ, and one another by love, and is against hatred, division, and abusing others.

“ Judgment 3.—‘ Mine, then, is the spirit of Cain, for I cannot endure any that are not of my opinion and way, and it inclineth me to malice, and unpeaceableness, and division.’

“ Mark 4.—The Spirit of Christ is a spirit of holiness, and doth not favour licentiousness in doctrine, or in life.

“ Judgment 4.—‘ Though I am for strict principles, I am loose in practice.’

“ Mark 5.—Christ’s Spirit inclineth to love, humility, and meekness, and makes men stoop to each other for their good.

“ Judgment 5.—‘ None more uncharitable, proud, and censorious than I.’

“ Mark 6.—The Spirit of Christ makes men little, low, and vile in their own eyes: it is pride that puffeth up.

“ Judgment 6.—‘ My self-conceitedness shows that I am unhumbled.’

“ Mark 7.—The Spirit of Christ doth work to the mortifying of the flesh, even all its inordinate desires, and to self-denial.

“ Judgment 7.—‘ I am a stranger to the work of

mortification and self-denial. I can deny myself nothing but the comfort of well-doing. I cannot deny my sloth so far as to go to prayer when I am convinced of my necessity.'

"Mark 8.—The Spirit of Christ is a prevailing spirit, and doth not only wish and strive, but overcome the flesh, as to its rule.

"Judgment 8.—'The flesh prevaieth with me against the Spirit.'

"Mark 9.—Christ's Spirit is the Author of his worship and ordinances, and suits the souls of believers to them, the word, sacraments, &c.

"Judgment 9.—'They seem not suitable to my soul; I am against them, and had rather not use them, if I durst.'

"Mark 10.—Christ's Spirit is in all the saints, and inclineth them to holy communion with each other in love, especially to those in whom this Spirit most eminently worketh.

"Judgment 10.—'It is not thus with me. I desire not the communion of saints; my affections are most to those who are best to me, whether they have more or less of the Spirit.'

"To go no further, it is now evident that I am a graceless person. Though all these things are imperfect in the best, and some are more wanting in one particular than another; yet, where all their contraries are predominant, as in me, that person is told, by this sermon, that they are none of Christ's. How much doth my behaviour at this time make this appear, when I can, with a hard heart, and a dry eye, and a steady hand, declare myself at present an heir of everlasting wo! But the longest day will quickly come, though I strive to put it as far from me."

II. *Her sickness, recovery, and experience.*

"These convictions did neither die, nor pass unto despair, but to serious conversion; yet put her to

struggle hard against backwardness to secret duties, and the forsaking of some vanities; but presently God seemed sharply to entertain this returning soul. And while we were all rejoicing in her change, she fell into a cough and seeming consumption, in which we almost despaired of her life. I and my praying neighbours were so sorry that such a changed person should presently be taken away, before she had time to manifest her sincerity, and do God any service in the world, that in grief they resolved to fast and pray for her; for former experience had lately much raised their belief of the success of prayer. They had often prayed for me in dangerous illness, and I had speedy help.

“I was with them at prayer for this woman; and compassion made us all extraordinarily fervent, and God heard us, and especially delivered her, as it were, by nothing, or by an altogether undesigned means. She drank, of her own inclination, not being directed, a large quantity of sirup of violets, and the next morning her nose bled, which it scarce ever did before or since, and the lungs seemed cleared, and her pulse suddenly amended, her cough abated, and her strength returned in a short time.

“She being of too timorous and tender a nature, and the sharp work of her repentance being yet upon her spirit, for death to come and seem to summon her away to eternity at such a season and unsettled state, must needs greatly increase her fears, when the strongest long experienced christians find it no easy work to die in peace and willing resignation. But she had still a concealing temper, which made it never the easier within.

“When God had recovered her, her mother invited those that fasted and prayed for her, to keep a day of thanksgiving for her deliverance. I asked her what she would have us give thanks for particularly? And in the morning, as we began, she that was recovered gave us in the following paper:—

“ ‘ My life hath been a life of very great mercies, and these have aggravated my sin in overlooking them. Some of those which God hath most affected my heart with, I shall here mention ; but, alas ! with a heart very insensible of the greatness of them.

“ ‘ 1. My mother’s restoration I would first thank God for ; and next, for many mercies of mine own. Four times before this I have been delivered from great danger of death.

“ ‘ And now I desire to acknowledge his mercy in delivering me from this death-threatening disease, and that in answer to prayers I am here now in competent health to speak of the goodness of the Lord.

“ ‘ 2. I desire to acknowledge it a mercy that God afflicted me ; and though I cannot, with the psalmist, say, ‘ But now I keep thy statutes ; ’ I can say, ‘ Before I was afflicted I went astray.’ And how many great sins God hath prevented by this affliction, I cannot tell ; but am sure that God hath dealt very graciously with me ; and I have had many comforts in my sufferings which God hath not given to many of his beloved ones.

“ ‘ 3. I desire to acknowledge God’s great mercy to me in bringing me to this town, under such useful means of grace ; and that at such a time when I was even ready to engage in a course of sin and vanity, beyond what I had formerly lived in. This mercy is much greatened by the time ; for had the Lord brought me hither in infancy, and removed me at riper years, the mercy would not have been so great. And, if I had gone longer on in a course of hardening sins, it had been less than now it is.

“ ‘ 4. I desire to acknowledge it a great mercy that I want no outward thing, but am enabled to be helpful unto others, and have all the temporal mercies that I can well desire, for my encouragement in the ways of God.

“ ‘ 5. I desire to acknowledge it a great mercy that

God hath given me an interest in the hearts and prayers of so many of his faithful servants in this place.

“‘ 6. I desire to acknowledge it a great mercy, that God hath made me the child of godly parents, and a child of many prayers.

“‘ 7. I desire to acknowledge it a great mercy, which I can never be thankful enough for, that God hath given me a heart in any measure willing to acknowledge his mercies, and be thankful for them; and that, notwithstanding all that sin and Satan hath done to hinder it, he hath made me desirous this day to give up myself, and all that I have, to him; taking him only for my God and chief felicity.

“‘ And now, the requests that I desire you to make to God, on my behalf, are these:—

“‘ 1. That he will give me a more thankful soul, that I may praise him all my days.

“‘ 2. And an humble heart, that I may be taught of God, who looketh on the proud afar off.

“‘ 3. And a tender conscience, that I may fear to offend him, and hate all sin.

“‘ 4. And strength so to resist temptations, that I be not led by Satan to dishonour God, or to provoke him.

“‘ 5. And a meek and quiet frame of spirit, that I may be contented to bear the afflictions that God shall lay me under, without murmuring or repining.’

“‘ This being that which she gave us in, I find, under her hand, this secret renewal, that same day, of her covenant with God, which I annex:—

“‘ This being a day set apart for returning thanks to God, for his mercy in delivering me from the gates of death, these people being they that have earnestly supplicated the throne of grace on my behalf, I here now renew my covenant with Almighty God, and resolve, by his grace, to endeavour to get and keep a fresh sense of his mercy on my soul, and a greater sense yet of my sin. I resolve to set myself against

my sin with all my might, and not take its part, or extenuate it, or keep the devil's counsel, as I have done, to the wronging of God, and the wounding of my own soul. I resolve, by God's assistance, to set upon the practice of known duty, and not to study shifts and evasions to put off those which are either troublesome, chargeable, or likely to render me dishonourable and vile in the eyes of the carnal persons of the world. And this I do upon these considerations, and for these reasons:—

“ ‘ 1. My life hath been a life of great mercy. God hath preserved it more than this once, and hath done exceeding great things for me, which engageth me more than many others, though all rational creatures are obliged to live to God their Maker.

“ ‘ 2. God hath not only given me life, but, in some measure, ability and opportunity to do him service; yea, and already some encouragement in the hopes of the success of some of my poor endeavours.’ (I suppose, on some of her servants.)

“ ‘ 3. God hath more engaged me to himself, by taking me into his family, and planting me in his garden, and watering me with the dew from heaven. He hath set me in a fruitful soil; he hath given me the high privilege of a part in the hearts and prayers of his people; and I may say that I live to speak it, That God is a God hearing prayers, and hath heard and answered them. Though the tempter be busy to make me think diminutively of this mercy, yet I must not, but must acknowledge the greatness of it.

“ ‘ 4. As all these, and more engagements, are upon me; so I am already engaged, by the baptismal covenant, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as my God, and chief good, and only happiness, and as my Redeemer, Head, and Husband, and as my Sanctifier and Comforter; and I have renewed it in the sacrament of the Lord's supper: and how can I go back, that have thus far engaged myself, and daily receive

from God more obligations? Yea, God will expect more from me than from many others. Let me, therefore, see that I be in good earnest with God, and think not to put him off with hypocrisy. Let me not deceive myself, for God will not be mocked: what I sow, I shall reap. If I belong to God, though I suffer whilst I am in the body, they will be but light afflictions, and but for a moment; but the everlasting kingdom will be mine inheritance; and, when this life is ended, I shall reign with Christ; I shall be freed from sin and suffering, and for ever rejoice with saints and angels. But, should I prove a hypocrite, I lose my labour, I lose my God, and damnation with devils and damned ones will be my reward for ever, and this the greater, as my mercies have been abundant and great.

“Therefore, I here desire, this day, to renew my covenant with God, and to beg the prayers of this people, that God will not leave me to myself, but help me, by the sufficient grace of Christ, to keep the covenant which I have made. And I intend to keep this paper by me, to help to remind me, and quicken me to duty, and hinder me from sin, and encourage me to go on cheerfully against temptations, looking still to Christ, who forsaketh not those, that, by faith and repentance, come to him.

“To all this let me add these considerations of the vanity of the creature, and of all false hopes.

“It is contrary to the nature of the created things to be our peace; they are our discomforts and troubles, except so far as they help to lead us to the Creator. Let me not forget the time when I seemed near death. What comfort had I then in creatures? What ease from them? Was not all my hope in God? All creatures showed me that side on which vanity was written, and they had nothing that could satisfy my soul. Though I had as much mercy, in means and friends, as I could possibly desire, yet all this was nothing to me; the trouble of parting with them was

much more than the comfort of enjoying them; and so it will be with me still; which should teach me to keep my heart loose from the creature, and not to over-love any thing on this side heaven. Why should my heart be fixed where my home is not? Heaven is my home; God, in Christ, is all my happiness; and, where my treasure is, there my heart should be. Come away, O my heart, from vanity; mount heavenward, and be not dead, or dull, if thou wouldst be free from trouble, and taste of real joy and pleasure. Hath not experience yet taught thee, that creature-comforts, though they may be roses, have their pricks? Canst not thou be content to look on them, and smell them at a distance, and covet no other use, while thou art in the garden where they grow, and be content to leave them there behind thee? If thou must needs have them in thy bosom, thou must scratch thy fingers to get them; and, when thou hast them, though the smell awhile delight thee, they will quickly wither, and are gone. Away, then, O my carnal heart; retire to God, the only satisfying object. There mayest thou love, without all danger of excess! Let thy love to God be fixed and transcendent. Amen.'

"Though these were the strivings of her heart towards God, her fears and troubles did not so pass away. Settled peace of soul seldom comes quickly to young converts, though their sincere resolutions may be settled. I find, among her papers, yet more of that day's work, upon her after-examination and review. Bear with the length, if I transcribe it as I find it under her hand:—

"'Christ saith, "In the world you shall have trouble, in me you shall have peace." Something of both I now find at this time. This night, after returning thanks to God for my recovery, I find my heart sad, and trouble upon my spirits: and well it may be so, for the sins of this day have been very great; my

heart hath not answered the expressions of thanks which have been uttered by the mouths of those who spake them to God. No, no, my heart hath not stirred, and been drawn out towards my God. The thoughts of his love have not ravished my soul. Alas! I scarcely felt any holy spark to warm my soul this day. This day, which was a day of the greatest mercy of any in all my life; the day in which I have had an opportunity to give thanks for all the mercies of my life, and thanksgiving itself is a greater mercy than the rest. All other mercies are to prepare for this. This is the work of a glorified saint, even a saint in heaven before the blessed face of God. It is his everlasting business to sing the songs of thanksgiving and praise to the Most High. But my thoughts have not been filled with the sweet foretastes of this blessed work which I might have had this day. O God! I beseech thee, forgive my sin, and lay not my deadness to my charge, but overlook all my transgressions, and look on me in Jesus Christ my Saviour. I am thine, Lord, and not mine own. This day I have, under my hand and seal, in the presence of witnesses, nay, in thine own presence, who art witness sufficient, were there no eye to see me, or ear to hear me; thou, Lord, that knowest all things, knowest that I have devoted my all to thee. Take it, and accept my sacrifice. Help me to pay my vows! Wilt thou not accept me, because I do it not more sincerely and believingly? O Lord, I unfeignedly desire to do it aright. O wilt thou strengthen my weak desires! I believe; Lord, help my unbelief.

“Thou, who canst make me what I am not, O make me what thou wouldst have me be! In thee there is all fulness, and to thee I desire to come by Christ. Wilt thou now cast me off, because I do it not unreservedly? Lord, I confess the devil tempteth, and the flesh saith, “Spare something: what! let all go?” And I find in me a carnal selfish principle, ready to close with the temptation. But thou

canst prevent and conquer all, and speak death to these corruptions, and bid the tempter be gone. It is thy pleasure here to suffer thy dear children to be tempted; but suffer not temptations to prevail against thy Spirit and grace. If temptation be like a torrent of water, to smother, quench, or hide the flame, yet wilt thou never let all the sparks of thy grace be put out in the soul where once thou hast truly kindled it. But, Lord, suffer not such floods to fall on my soul, where the spark is so small already, that it is even scarce discernible. O quicken it, and blow it up to a holy flame! Most gracious God, O do it here, who hast done it for many a soul! Oh, what have I said—that I have a spark of grace? Why, the least spark is worth ten thousand times more thanks than I can ever express; and I have been dead and unthankful, as is before confessed! And is that a sign of grace? Unthankful, dead, and dull I have been, and still am; but yet it must needs be from God's gift in me, that I have any desires after him; and that, this day, I have desired to devote myself to him, and that I can say I would be more holy, and more heavenly, even as the Lord would have me be. Nay, I do know the time when I had none of these desires, and had no mind to God, and the ways of godliness; and do I not know that there be many in this condition who have no desires after Christ and holiness?

“ ‘ Here, then, is matter of comfort given me from Him that doth accept the desires of his poor creatures, even the Lord Christ, who will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. I see, then, that I have yet matter of rejoicing, and must labour to be so humbled for my remaining sins, as may tend to my future joy in believing; but not so as to be discouraged and frightened from God, who is long-suffering, and abundant in mercy. Rouse up thyself, then, to God, my soul; humbly, but believingly, repent that thou hast been so unthankful and insensible of the benefits

this day received : up, up, and lie not down so heavily ; God hath heard prayers for thee, and given thee life and opportunity to serve him. He hath given thee all the outward mercies thy heart can desire. He hath given thee dear, godly, able friends, such as can help thee in the way to heaven ; yea, he hath set those to beg spiritual mercies for thee, who prevailed for temporal for thee, and often for many others ; why, then, shouldst thou not watch and pray, and wait in hope that he hath heard their prayers this day for thy soul, as formerly for thy body ? They are things commanded of God to be asked ; and we have his promise that, seeking, we shall find. . It may be, this night, many of God's dear children will yet pray for my soul ; I doubt not some will ; and shall I not be glad of such an advantage ? I heard, this day, that I " must not forbear thanks, because the mercies are yet imperfect," else we should never give thanks on earth. Though, therefore, my grace be yet but a spark, and weak, my body weak, my heart sad ; all these administer matter of thanks and praise, as well as of supplication. Let me, therefore, keep close to both, they being the life of my life while I live here ; and, having daily need of supply from God, let me daily be with him, and live as in his presence. Let him be the chief in all my thoughts, my heart, and life.

" Let me remember to be earnest in prayer for my poor relations, and dear friends, and the church and people of God in general. And let me strive to keep such a moderate sense of sorrow on my soul, as occasion requireth. I have now cause of sorrow for parting with my dear friends, my father, my pastor. He is, by Providence, called away, and going a long journey. What the Lord will do with him, I cannot foresee ; it may be he is preparing some great mercy for us, and for his praise ; I know not but such a day as this may be kept here on his account. The will of the Lord be done, for he is wise and good : we are his own, let him

do with us what he pleaseth : all shall be for good to them that love God. I have cause to be humbled that I have been so unprofitable under mercies and means ; it may grieve me, now he is gone, that there is so little that came from him left upon my soul. O let this quicken and stir me up to be more diligent in the use of all remaining helps and means. And, if ever I should enjoy this mercy again, O let me make it appear that this night I was sensible of my neglect of it.

“ And now here is comfort, that I have to deal with a God of mercy, who will hear a poor repenting sinner ; a God who will in no wise cast out those that come to him, but loveth whom he loveth to the end. This is the God whom I have chosen and taken for my portion ; the same God is his God, his Guide, and Comforter. The whole world is but a house where God's children dwell a little while, till he hath fitted them for the heavenly mansions ; and, if he send them out of one room into another, to do his work, and try their obedience ; and if he put some in the darkest corners of his house, to keep them humble, though he separate those that are most beloved by each other, it is but that they may not love so much as to be loth to part and come to Him who should have all their love. However it fareth with his children in this house, or howling wilderness, the time will come, and is at hand, when all the children shall be separate from the rebels, and be called home to dwell with their Father, their Head, and Husband, and the elect shall all be gathered into one. Then farewell sorrow, farewell hard heart ! farewell tears and sad repentance ! And then blessed saints that have believed and obeyed ! Ever so unworthy, crowned thou must be ! This was the project of redeeming love. When the Lord shall take our bodies from the grave, and make us shine as the sun in glory ; then shall friends meet and never part, and remember their sad and weary nights and days no more. Then may we love freely. What now is wanting to

dispel all sorrow from my heart? Nothing but the greater hopes that I shall be one of this number. This, this can do it. No matter if I had no friend near me, and none on earth; if God be not far from me, it is well enough; and, whatever here befalls the church and people of God, it is but as for one day, and presently the storm will be all over. Let me, therefore, cast all my care on God. Let me wait on him in the way of duty, and trust him; let me run, with patience, the race that is set before me, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith, and believingly go to him in all my troubles; and let me so labour here, that I may find rest to my soul in the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

“ ‘Rest! Oh, sweet word! The weary shall have rest, they shall rest in the Lord.

“ ‘April 10, on Thursday night at twelve of the clock; a day and night never to be forgotten by the least of all God’s mercies, yea, less than the least—thy unworthy, unthankful, hard-hearted creature,

“ ‘M. CHARLTON.’

“ Is there not here, in all these papers, which I saw not till she was dead, a great deal of work for one day, besides all the public work of a thanksgiving day? If I should give you an account of all her following twenty-one years, what a volume would it amount to! If you ask why I recite all this, which is but matter well known to ordinary christians, I answer:—1. It is not as matter of knowledge, but of soul-workings towards God. 2. Is not this extraordinary in a convert of a year, or few months’ standing? 3. The love of God, and her, makes me think it worth the publishing. Those who think otherwise may pass it by; but there are souls, to whom it will be savoury and profitable.

“ Yet she continued under great fears that she had not saving grace, because she had not that degree of

holy affection which she desired. And before, in her sickness, her fears increased her disease and danger. I will here, for the use of others in the like case, recite some scraps of a letter* of counsel, as I find them transcribed by herself:—

“ ‘ I advise you to set more effectually to the means of your necessary consolation: your strange, silent keeping your case to yourself, from your mother, and all your friends, is an exceeding injury to your peace. Is it God, or Satan, that hindereth you from opening your sore, and makes you think that concealment is your wisdom? If it be pride that forbids it, how dare you obey such a commander? Many of our sores are half healed when well opened. If prudence foresee some forbidding inconvenience, you have prudent friends, and two prudent persons may see more than one. But, because you will not tell us, I will dis-junctively tell it you.

“ ‘ 1. Your trouble of soul is either some affliction ; 2. Or some sin ; 3. Or the doubt of your sincerity and true grace. •

“ ‘ 1. If it be affliction, dare you so indulge impatience, as to conclude against your future comforts, while you have God’s love and title to salvation? Dare you say, that these are of such small weight, that a cross like yours will weigh them down? and that you will not rejoice in all the promises of life eternal, till your cross be removed?

“ ‘ 2. If it be sin, it is either past or present. If past, why do you not repent, and thankfully accept your pardon? If present, it is inward corruption or outward transgression. Whichever it be, if you love it, why do you grieve for it, and groan under it? If you grieve for it, why are you not willing to leave it, and be holy? If you are willing to leave it, and would fain have God’s grace, in the use of his means, to make

• Probably written by Baxter himself.

you holy, this is the true nature of repentance. And why, then, are you not thankful for grace received; for pardon, adoption, and your part in Christ, more than you are troubled for remaining sin? Should none rejoice that have sin to trouble them, and keep them in a daily watch and war? Read Rom. vii. and viii. if you will see the contrary. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins." Dare you refuse your comforts on such reasons as would deny comfort to all the world? He that saith he hath no sin, is a liar. And will you, for this, deny the known duty of thanks and praise for all that you have received? You have been taught to distinguish between cause of doubting, and cause of filial humiliation. And if it were any particular sin, that needs particular help and counsel, why do you not open it for help, which, it is probable, would do more against it, than many years' secret trouble and dejection alone will do.

"3. If it be doubts of your sincerity and grace, why do you refuse to reason the case, and say what it is which persuadeth you that you are graceless, that we may try it by the word of God? What evidence is it that you want? You have confessed, that sometimes you are convinced of sincerity; and can you so easily deny what you have found, as to conclude yourself so miserable as you do? Should all do thus that have not constant apprehensions of their evidence, and whose assurance is hindered by imperfections? You have heard the contrary.

"But, suppose that you have yet no saving grace, or part in Christ, why stand you complaining, while Christ stands intreating you to accept his mercy? Is he not in good earnest? The offer is free; it is not your purchase and merit, but consent, that will prove your title. Why do you complain, and not consent even to the baptismal covenant? Or, if you consent,

why do you complain, as if Christ's promise were not true, or as if consent were not a proof of saving faith? If you confess that you should not doubt and be dejected on such terms, methinks the cure should be half wrought. Dare you indulge it, while you know it to be your sin? Have you not sin enough already? And is it not unkindness to deny so great a mercy as the converting grace which you so lately felt; and to suspect His love, who is Love itself, and hath so largely expressed his love to you? Would you easily believe that your mother would kill you for such defects as you fear that God will condemn you for? Yea, though she were perfectly just and holy? Is it congruous to hear ministers tell men from Christ, that he beseecheth them to be reconciled to God, and will refuse none that are willing to receive his grace and cure; and, at the same time, to hear such as you almost ready to despair, as if God would not be reconciled, nor give grace to them that fain would have it, but will be inclined to reject humbled souls?

“ ‘ Reason not for your distrustful fears and sorrows, but still disown them and accuse them, and then they will vanish by degrees and die; yea, then you will surely oppose them yourself, and God will help you. Can you look that God should help you against the sin which you plead for and defend? If faith and love be the vital graces, distrust of God, and denying his love, must not be defended as no sin. As the ungodly cannot expect the grace which they refuse, so how can you expect the peace which you oppose, and say, “My soul refuseth to be comforted,” Psalm lxxvii. 2; and say of your passionate fear and grief, as Jonah of his anger, “I do well to be angry, even unto death?” Be convinced that Christ is yours, if you accept him, and consent; and then that comfort is your interest, right, and duty; and then you will do more to comfort yourself, than I am endeavouring when I chide you for your fears. Surely sinful sorrow is no desirable thing, nor to

be pleaded for. You durst do nothing to the murder of a friend, no, nor to his grief; and you are bid to love your neighbour as yourself. Away, then, with your weakening griefs and troubles, lest they prove a degree of self-murder. If you care for yourself, the comfort of your mother and friends, and the honour of the unspeakable riches of God's grace, at least own it to be your duty to oppose sinful fear, and to rejoice in God, and serve him with delight and cheerful praises, and do your best against all that is against this duty. And suffer not your sore to fester by your silence, but open your case to some one that is able to help you to try it impartially by the word of God, and to pray with you that God will mercifully discover your infirmities, and the remedy. It were but wisdom to conceal your case from others, if you can well be cured without their help.'

“Some strivings against her fears and sorrows I find next in this paper following, dated, by her, April 3:—

“‘The sadder my present condition is, the greater is the mercy that I am yet alive; why, then, should I not give God thanks for that, and beg the rest which yet I want? And, though my life seem but a burden to me sometimes, it is my great mistake; for the greatest afflictions are nothing to hell-torments. Were they as great as ever any had, while I am alive, on this side eternity, there is hope. The time of grace is yet continued. If I be found in mercy's way, I know not but God may yet be gracious, and save my soul, as he hath done my life, at his people's prayers. For I cannot but look on my life as an answer of their prayers. And surely they desired my life only that I might live to God. I desired it myself on no other terms. It was my earnest request that I might not live, if not to him. Why, then, should I be persuaded by Satan to think that God will not give me grace as well as life? May I not rather be encouraged with

patience to wait for further mercy? It is a mercy that I am in any measure sensible of my danger, and have any desire to be holy. I will, therefore, stir up my soul to thankfulness, and be humbled that I can be no more thankful. I will acknowledge the mercy I have received, and the probability of future mercy; and this, by God's assistance, the devil shall not hinder me from doing.'

"I will add one of her papers, containing her resolutions, after her recovery, in some few particulars:—

"'December 30, was my worst day. I did not, then, think to be alive this day: I ought not to forget it. On January 1, New-year's day, I first bled at the nose very much, and afterwards mended. The fourth day was kept in humiliation for me. April 10, was a day of thanksgiving.

"'When I thought I should die, I was more than ordinarily sensible of my unprofitable life, and had such convictions as usually people in my condition have; and I then made many resolutions, as, in such cases, others do. I remembered that I had heard much of the promises that many made in sickness, which they never performed; and I thought it was gross hypocrisy to speak now of that which I was past performing, as I thought; but that I had better write down my purposes, and discover them if God recovered me, that they might be as strong an engagement on me, as if I had spoken them to men.

"'1. I resolved that I would endeavour to get and keep a sense of that great mercy of God's restoring me from the peril of threatened death, in answer of prayers; which was the greater, in that God threatened to take me hence when I was but in the birth, and had scarce well begun to live. This mercy I promised to be thankful for, and to acknowledge other mercies, as God should make me able.

"'2. I resolved that I would endeavour to be in a fixed state and way of duty; and, in order to this, I

would take advice of one who is, I conceive, most fit to advise me. And I resolve, by God's assistance, that I will not consult with flesh and blood, nor study my carnal interest, but resolutely set on the way of my duty, and freely discourse my thoughts, so far as is requisite to my just advice. And that I will speak my reasons and heart-risings against any thing that is propounded to me, which I judge unmeet. And I resolved, when I saw my duty, cheerfully to do it, and keep a sense of the sweetness and obligations of God's love and mercy.

“ ‘3. I resolved to pray and labour for a true sense of the sins of this nation in general; and, in particular, of the sins of my relations, and of my own. And that, till it please God to give me cause of rejoicing on the behalf of my relations, and of my own soul's recovery and spiritual welfare, I will continue with humiliation to supplicate the Lord. And though I would not shut out a greater duty by a lesser, yet I will avoid all manner of feastings as much as I well can, and all noxious sensual delights; and, when I must be present, I will use some mortifying restraint. And this I would do in my habit, and all other things, but that I would lay no snare on myself, by renouncing what occasions may oblige me to; but, by all means, I would strive to keep upon my heart a sense of my friends' danger and my own.

“ ‘I begin already to be sensible of my misusing the helps which God had given me; I know not how I should love ordinances and means of grace, and to what end; not to break my heart when Providence removeth them from me, or me from them; but I should love them for God, and use them for him, and expect my greatest comfort from him, and not from men and means themselves. This is no more than what I thought I had known long ago, but I never knew it indeed till now. And now I do but begin to know it. When I felt my heart ready to sink under a burden of

sorrow, God was pleased to ask me what I ailed? Was my condition worse than ever? had I less hopes of his love than heretofore? If not, why do I mourn more than when I lay under that curse? What is it that I have chosen for my hope and happiness? is that lost and gone? Am I left in such a place or case as God cannot be found in if I truly seek him? or that God cannot sweeten with his presence? If not, why do I not contentedly thank God for what I have already had? I cannot say it is better that I had never had it, than now to leave it; no, I must be willing to submit to God, and be humbled in the sense of my abuse of mercy, so far as it may quicken me to diligence for the time to come. And, if ever God more trust me with such treasure as once I had, I will strive to show that I better know the worth of it than I did before. My thoughts often tell me, that if I were but in a condition in which I had an opportunity to serve God, with more cost to the flesh than I here do, it would either show my hypocrisy, or give me more assuring evidence that I am indeed sincere.'

"And it is a useful note that I find added to this by her:—

" 'If my trouble be for my sin, 1. My care will be more for the removing of my sin, than of the affliction.

" '2. And, if God should take away the affliction, it would not content me, unless sin be taken away, and my heart amended.

" '3. If it be sin that I am troubled for, it will be my great care not to sin in my trouble.

" '4. And if it be my sin that troubleth me, I have the more cause to submit to God's hand, and silently bear the punishment of my iniquity; it shameth murmuring, when we truly look on sin the cause, though it bring the wholesome sorrow of repentance.

" '5. And if I mourn for fear, lest God be departing, I should seek him, and cleave the closer to him,

and not depart from God, and then he will not depart from me.'

"While in her languishing, and after it, she was still cast down, and condemned herself as a graceless wretch; and her good mother and friends were afraid that her grief would increase her sickness, as it did their sadness; and yet she obstinately concealed it from all, save a few sad complaints to one person, who wrote thereof some fragments, which she extracted for her use. I shall here recite them for others that have the same fears.

"The misconduct of a relation troubling her, this was set down:—

"'When God hath done so much for you, will you leave it in the power of an inconstant creature to trouble you, and rob you of your peace? Is the joy in the Holy Ghost so subject to the malice of your enemies, or the weakness of your friends? Delight yourself in an all-sufficient, constant God, and he will be to you a sufficient, constant delight, and will give you the desires of your heart. I see you are yet imperfect in self-denial, while you are too sensible of unkindnesses and crosses from your friends, and bear them with too much passion and weakness; know you not yet what the creature is, and how little to be expected from it? Do you not still reckon to meet with such infirmities in the best, as will be injurious to others, as they are troublesome to themselves? It is God that we most wrong, and yet he beareth with us; and so must we with one another. Had you expected that creatures should deal as creatures, and sinners as sinners, how little of this kind of trouble had you felt. Especially take heed of too much regard to matters of mere reputation, and the thoughts of men; else you are like a leaf in the wind, that will have no rest. Look on man as nothing, and be content to approve yourself to God; and then so much honour as is good

for you, will follow as the shadow. If every frailty and unkindness of the best friends must be your trouble, it is to be impatient with the unavoidable depravity of mankind; and you may as well grieve that they were born in sin, and made your acquaintance. And it should be used as a mercy to keep you from inordinate affections to friends. It is a mercy to be driven from creature-rest, though it be by enemies. Keep a fixed apprehension of the inconsiderableness of all these little things that cross you, and turn your eye to God, to Christ, to heaven, the things of unspeakable weight, and you will have no room for these childish troubles.

“ ‘Yet turn not the discovery of this your weakness into dejection, but amendment. I perceive you are more apt to hold to the sense of your own distempers, than to think what counsel is given you against them.’

“ ‘On another occasion she recorded these words:—

“ ‘How hard is it to keep our hearts in going too far, even in honest affections, toward the creature, while we are so backward to love God, who should have all the heart, and soul, and might. Too strong love to any, though it be good in the kind, may yet be sinful and hurtful in the degree. 1. It will turn too many of your thoughts from God, and they will be too often running after the beloved creature. 2. And, by this exercise of thoughts and affections on the creature, it may divert and cool your love to God, which will not be kept up, unless our thoughts be kept more to him; yea, though it be for his sake that you love them. 3. It will increase your sufferings, by interesting you in all the dangers and troubles of those whom you overlove.’

“ ‘When she seemed, to herself, near death:—

“ ‘You now see what the world, and all its pleasures are, and how it would have used you, if you had had no better a portion, and God had not taught you a happier choice. Providence now tells you that they

are vanity, and, if over-valued, worse; but, if you learn to see their nothingness, you will be above the trouble of losing them, as well as the snares of too delightful enjoying them. Pardon all injuries to men, and turn your thoughts from them, and keep your heart as near as possible to the heart of Christ, and live as in his arms, who is usually sweetest when the creature most faileth us, if we do but turn our hearts from it to him.'

" Another time :—

" ' Can you find that you are resolvedly devoted to Christ, and yet doubt whether Christ be resolvedly and surely yours? Are you more willing or more faithful than he?'

" Hence she gathered herself as followeth :—

" ' When I read the evidence of my self-resignation to Christ, I should, as it were, see Christ standing over me with the tenderest care, and hear him say, " I accept thee as my own." For I must believe his acceptance, as I perform my resignation. Oh, what is he providing for me! What entertainment with him shall I shortly find! Not such as he found with man, when he came to seek us; it is not a manger, a crown of thorns, a cross, that he is preparing for me. When I have had my part of these in following him, I shall have my place in the glorious Jerusalem.'

" This fragment she wrote next :—

" ' For the sake of your own soul, and life, and friends, and for the honour of that tender mercy and free grace which you are bound to magnify, let not Satan get advantage against your peace and thankfulness to God, and the acknowledgment of his obliging love. Let him not, on pretence of humiliation, turn your eyes on a weak distempered heart, from the unspeakable mercy which should fill your heart with love and joy, notwithstanding all your lamented infirmities. You perceive not that it is Satan who would keep you still under mournful sadness, under the pretence of

repentance and godly sorrow. You are not acquainted with his wiles. You have cause of sorrow, but much more of joy. And your rejoicing in God's love would please him better than all your sad complaints and troubles, though he despise not a contrite spirit. I charge it on your conscience, that, when you are in prayer, you confess and lament your distrustful, suspicious, unthankful, uncomfortable thoughts of God and Jesus Christ, more than all your want of sorrow for him. And you trouble yourself for such kind of sins, the honesty of whose occasion may give you more comfort than the fault doth sorrow. I know we have not our comfort at command. But see that your endeavour and striving be more for a comfortable than for a sorrowful frame of spirit.

“Two things I must blame you for: 1. That you take the imperfections of your duty and obedience to be greater reasons for discomfort, than the performance and sincerity are reasons for comfort; as if you thought any thing were perfect here, or that it were better do nothing, than do it imperfectly; or as if you would have no comfort till you can perform such duty and obedience as hath no need of pardon and a Saviour: and so no man living might have any comfort in any thing that he doth.

“2. That, when unreasonable troubles and fears are upon you, and troubling thoughts are still upon your mind, you say that you cannot help it, nor turn your thoughts away to any thing else. I know you have not an absolute power over your thoughts, but some you have; why else hath God made a law for our thoughts, and laid so much duty on them, and forbidden their sin so much? Much may be done, if you will be resolute.

“Think whether Christ came from the Father to bring tidings of sadness and despair, or of great joy; and whether angels preached not “Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, and to men good will?”

And whether faith, hope, and love, which are the things which Christ will work on souls, be not more powerful to destroy your sins, than despair or discouragement of mind?

“ ‘And, because you complain so much of sin, I ask you, Why doth not your conscience more accuse you of the sin of unthankfully denying or extenuating the mercies of God, and no more magnifying them? and for overlooking so much the meritorious righteousness of Christ, while you complain for want of more of your own? I would not deceive you, by telling you that you need none in yourself, and that all your righteousness is out of you in Christ; I know that your righteousness must exceed that of the pharisees, and the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, and that he that doth righteousness is righteous; but at what bar or tribunal? only at that of grace, which supposeth the reconciling, pardoning righteousness of Christ: it is not at the bar of rigorous justice, according to the law, which requireth innocence to justification. There Christ only is your righteousness; and you have none, and must dream of none, but that which floweth from his, and stands in subordination to it, and is your title to it, and improvement of it, even your thankfully accepting a free-given Saviour, Head, and Lord, and pardon, and the Spirit to sanctify you more, and fit you for communion with God and for glory. Esteem most, choose first, and seek most the love of God the Father, the grace of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, and this subordinate righteousness will certainly prove the meritorious perfect righteousness of Christ to be for you, instead of a perfect righteousness of your own. There is no defect in his sacrifice or merits; if you wanted a title to Christ, you were unjustified; but no one wants that, who consenteth to his covenant, as before: and that consent you cannot deny. Will you live like a forsaken orphan exposed in a wilderness, while God’s

tender love is saving you, and Christ is glorying in you as the fruit of his blood, and the angels of God are serving you, and rejoicing at your conversion? I entreat you think whether it be not the great work that God hath called you to, to honour his grace, and propagate to all about you, as you are able, a joyful, thankful, hoping, and praising frame of soul; and to stir up all to the delightful praise of God? As ministers must do it by preaching, all must do it by conference and example. And is your dejected sadness the performance of this?’

“When she desired to be prayed for, she wrote down this answer, which I find now in her papers.

“‘It is well if you know what prayer to put up, or what to desire. I will pray for you according to the best of my judgment; and I will tell you for what, that you may know what to pray for yourself. First, I will pray that your thoughts may be turned to the magnifying of God’s love; and you may remember that he is as good as he is great; and that you may be more sensible of his mercy, than of your own unworthiness. 2. I will pray that you may have so lively an apprehension of your everlasting felicity, as may make you long to be with Christ. 3. That you may have more self-denial, and that humility which makes you little in your own eyes. 4. That you may be much less tender, and liable to commotion, and disquiet of mind, and less sensible of unkindnesses, and of bodily dangers, yea, and of sin itself, while the sense of it hinders the sense of mercy. A meek, and a quiet, and patient spirit, is of great price in the sight of God. I will pray that you may be delivered from too much inward passion, of fear, grief, or discontent. 5. I will pray, that no creature may seem greater, better, or more regardable, or necessary to you than it is; and that you would look on all as walking shadows, vanity, and liars, that is, untrusty, further than you can see God in them, or they lead you up to him; that

they may never be over-loved, over-feared, over-trusted, or their thoughts too much regarded. 6. Above all, I will pray that you may be less self-willed, and not to be too passionately or unmoveably set upon the fulfilling of all your will; but may have a will that is compliant with the will of God, and can change as he would have it; and will follow him, and not run before him; and can endure to be crossed, and denied by God and man, without discomposedness and impatient trouble of mind. 7. I shall pray that seeming wisdom may not entangle you, either in the concealment of any thing which greatly needeth your friends' advice, or in the hiding of your talents by unprofitable silence, as to all good discourse, upon the enmity which you have to hypocrisy; and that you will not live in sins of omission, for fear of seeming better than you are. By this you may know wherein I think you faulty.'

"The next I find, is this advice against her resolution to go to London.

"'It is not lawful to speak an idle word, and especially deliberately, much less to go an idle journey. What if you fall sick by the way, or some weakness take you there, will not conscience ask you, Who called you hither? Your weakness of spirit, that cannot endure this or that, at home, with your dearest friends, is so far below the quiet composed fortitude which you should have, that you ought not to give way to it. If you are at the command of your impatience, how are you obedient to the command of God? It is a greater work to bring your mind and will to the will of God, than to change place, or apparel, or run away, as Jonah, in discontent. O for a mind and will that needed no more to quiet it, than to know what is the will of God, and our duty; and in every estate therewith to be content. When you know your duty, do it resolutely and cheerfully, and scorn to run away, and turn your back, that you may do it without censure where you are unknown. Use well the means God here vouchsafes you,

and do your duty with a quiet mind, and follow God in your removes.'

"Much more of such counsels she transcribed, but I forbear reciting more. She ends those papers with these words:—

" 'The best creature-affections have a mixture of creature-imperfections, and therefore need some gall to wean us from the faulty part. God must be known to be God, our rest, and therefore the best creature to be but a creature! O miserable world! how long must I continue in it? and why is this wretched heart so loth to leave it, where we can have no fire without smoke, and our dearest friends must be our greatest grief; and when we begin in hope, and love, and joy, before we are aware we fall into an answerable measure of distress. Learn by experience, when any condition is inordinately or excessively sweet to thee, to say, "From hence must be my sorrow." Oh how true!'"

The gloom and depression observable in these religious exercises, are thus accounted for by her husband:—

"The soul, while in the body, works much according to the body's disposition. 1. She was of an extraordinary sharp and piercing wit. 2. She had a natural reservedness, and secresy, increased by thinking it necessary prudence not to be open; by which means she was often misunderstood by her nearest friends, and consequently often crossed and disappointed by those that would have pleased her. And as she could understand men much by their looks and hints, so she expected all should know her mind without her expressing it, which caused her frustrations and discontents. 3. And she had a natural tenderness, and troubledness of mind, upon the crossing of her just desires; too quick and ungovernable a sense of displeasing words or deeds. 4. She had a diseased irresistible fearfulness; her quick and too sensible nature was over timorous; and, to increase it, she said she

was four times, before I knew her, in danger of death, of which one was by the small pox. And the more to increase it, her mother's house, Apply castle, near Wellington, being a garrison, it was stormed while she was in it, and part of the housing about it burnt, and men lay killed before her face, and all of them threatened, and stripped of their clothing, so that they were fain to borrow clothes. 5. And the great work upon her soul, in her conversion, moved all her passions. 6. And then her dangerous sickness, and the sentence of death, to so young a convert, must needs be a very awaking thing; and, coming on her before she had any assurance of her justification, did increase her fear. 7. And in this case she lived in the churchyard side, where she saw all the burials of the dead, and kept a death's head (a skull) in her closet still before her. And other such mortifying spectacles increased her sad disposition.

"And the excessive love she had to her mother, did much increase her grief when she expected death.

"Though she called it melancholy, that by all this she was cast into, yet it rather seemed a partly natural, and partly an adventitious diseased fearfulness in a tender over-passionate nature, that had no power to quit her own fears, without any other cloud on her understanding.

"And all was much increased by her so stifling all the appearances of it, that it all inwardly wrought, and had no ease by vent.

"And, in a word, all the operations of her soul were very intense and strong: strong wit, and strong love, and strong displeasure. And, when God showed her what holiness was, she thought she must presently have it in so great a degree as the ripest saints do here attain; and that, because she had not as much heavenly life, and sense, and delight in God as she knew she should have and desired to have, she concluded that she had none that was sincere.

“One of the first things by which her change was discovered to her mother and friends, was her fervent secret prayers; for, living in a great house, of which the middle part was ruined in the wars, she chose a closet in the further end, where she thought none heard her. But some that overheard her, said, they never heard such fervent prayers from any person.”

She was, moreover, subject to frequent and painful afflictions, which, he observes, “tended to hinder her from a quiet and comfortable temper.”

III. *Her marriage, and our habitations.*

“The unsuitableness of our age, and my former known purposes against marriage, and against the conveniency of ministers’ marriage, who have no sort of necessity, made our marriage the matter of much public talk and wonder. And the true opening of her case and mine, and the many strange occurrences which brought it to pass, would take away the wonder of her friends and mine that knew us; and the notice of it would much conduce to the understanding of some other passages of our lives. Yet wise friends, by whom I am advised, think it better to omit such personal particularities, at least at this time. Both in her case and mine, there was much extraordinary, which it doth not much concern the world to be acquainted with. From the first thoughts of it, many changes and stoppages intervened, and long delays, till I was silenced and ejected with many hundreds more; and so, being separated from my old pastoral charge, which was enough to take up all my time and labour, some of my dissuading reasons were then over. And at last, on September 10, 1662, we were married in Bennet-Fink church, by Mr. Samuel Clerk, having been before contracted by Mr. Simeon Ash, both in the presence of Mr. Henry Ashurst and Mrs. Ash.

“She consented to these conditions of our marriage: 1. That I would have nothing that, before our

marriage, was her's; that I, who wanted no outward supplies, might not seem to marry her for covetousness. 2. That she would so alter her affairs, that I might be entangled in no law-suits. 3. That she would expect none of my time which my ministerial work should require.

"When we were married, her sadness and melancholy vanished; counsel did something to it, and contentment something, and being taken up with our household affairs did somewhat. And we lived in inviolated love, and mutual complacency, sensible of the benefit of mutual help. These near nineteen years I know not that ever we had any breach in point of love, or point of interest, save only that she somewhat grudged that I had persuaded her, for my quietness, to surrender so much of her estate, to a disabling her from helping others so much as she earnestly desired.

"Among the troubles that her marriage exposed her to, one was our often necessitated removals; which, to those that must take houses, and bind themselves to landlords, and fit and furnish them, is more than for single persons that have no such clogs or cares. First, we took a house in Moorfields; after at Acton; next that, another at Acton; and, after that, another there; and, after that, we were put to remove to one of the former again; and, after that, to divers others, in another place and county, as followeth: and the women have most of that sort of trouble. But she easily bare it all.

"And I know not that ever she came to any place where she did not extraordinarily win the love of the inhabitants, unless in any street where she staid so short a time as not to be known to them. Had she had but the riches of the world to have done the good that she had a heart to do, how much would she have been loved, who, in her mean and low condition, won so much.

"And her carriage won more love than her liberality; she could not endure to hear one give another

any sour, rough, or hasty word; her speech and countenance was always kind and civil, whether she had any thing to give or not.

“And all her kindness tended to some better end, than barely to relieve people’s bodily wants, even to oblige them to some duty that tended to the good of their souls, or to deliver them from some straits which filled them with hurtful care, and became a matter of great temptation to them. If she could induce the poor to hear God’s word, from conformist or nonconformist, or to read good serious practical books, whether written by conformists or nonconformists, it answered her end and desire; and many a hundred books hath she given to those ends.

“While I was at Acton, her carriage and charity so won the people there, that all that I ever heard of greatly esteemed and loved her. And she, being earnestly desirous of doing good, prepared her house for the reception of those that would come in, to be instructed by me, between the morning and evening public assemblies, and after. And the people that had never been used to such things, accounted worldly ignorant persons, gave us great hopes of their edification and reformation, and filled the room, and went with me also into the church, which was at my door. And when I was after removed, the people hearing that I again wanted a house, being ten miles off, they unanimously subscribed a request to me, to return to my old house with them, and offered to pay my house-rent, which I took kindly; and it was much her winning conversation which thus won their love.

“When I was carried thence to the common jail, for teaching the people, I never perceived her troubled at it; she cheerfully went with me into prison; she brought her best bed thither, and did much to remove the removeable inconveniences of the prison. I think she had scarce ever a pleasanter time in her life than

while she was with me there. And whereas people, upon such occasions, were not unapt to be liberal, it was against her mind to receive more than necessity required. Only three persons gave me just as much as paid lawyers and prison charges, and when one offered me more, she would not receive it. But all was far short of the great charges of our removal to another habitation.

“The parliament making a new sharper law against us, I was forced to remove into another county; thither she went with me, and removed her goods that were moveable, from Acton to Totteridge, being engaged for the rent of the house we left. At Totteridge, the first year, few poor people are put to the hardness that she was put to; we could have no house but part of a poor farmer's, where the chimnies smoked so extremely, as greatly annoyed her health; for it was a very hard winter, and the coal-smoke so filled the room that we all day sat in, that it was as a cloud, and we were even suffocated with the stink. And she had ever a great straitness of the lungs, that could not bear smoke or closeness. This was the greatest bodily suffering that her outward condition put her to, which was increased by my continual pain there. But her charity to her poor landlady set her son apprentice, who now liveth well.

“Thence we removed to a house, which we took to ourselves, which required such great alterations and amendment, as took her up much time and labour; and, to her great comfort, she got Mr. Corbet and his wife to dwell with us. And, in all these changes and troubles, she lived in great peace.

“When the king's declarations and licences gave nonconformists leave to build meeting places, and preach, she was against my going to London, till others were there settled, lest I should anticipate them, and gather any auditors, who would else go to others,

especially their old ejected pastors; but, when others were settled, she was earnest with me to go, for the exercise of my ministry.

"Upon our remove to London, out of tender regard to my health, which she thought the situation might contribute much unto, she chose, and took for us a most pleasant and convenient house in Southampton-square, where she died. These were our removes."

IV. *Her desires to do good.*

"As at her conversion, and in her sickness, she absolutely devoted herself, and all that she had, to God; so she earnestly set herself to perform it to the last. At first she gave but the tenth of her income to the poor; but I quickly convinced her, that God must not be stinted, but, as all was his, so all must be used for him by his stewards, and of all we must give account; only in his appointed order we must use it, which is, 1. For our own natural necessities. 2. For public necessary good. 3. For the necessities of our children, and such relations as are part of our charge. 4. And then for the godly poor. 5. And then for the common poor's necessities. 6. And, lastly, for conveniences: but nothing for unuseful things.

"To name the particular great instances of her private charity, is neither suitable to my ends, nor her desires. I will only instance some of her more public cares.

"She was earnestly desirous of the winning of souls, and of the utmost improvement of mine and other men's labours to that end. At Acton, I told you how she promoted it; and at Totteridge, out of church time, she gladly opened her doors to her neighbours that would come in for instruction.

"At London, when she saw me too dull and backward to seek any employment till I was called, and that most places in the city had some supplies, she first fished out of me in what place I most desired

more preaching. I told her in St. Martin's parish, where are said to be forty thousand more than can come into the church, especially among all the new buildings at St. James's, where many neighbours live like Americans, and have heard no sermon for many years.

"When she had once heard this, without my knowledge she set one to seek after some capacious room there; and none was found, but divers rooms over the market-house laid together. She gets one to take them. And they two agreed to importune me to preach each morning, and in the afternoon to get, by turns, the ablest ministers they could procure in London. And to that end she got a minister a hundred miles off to come up to help me, promising him £40. a year to go from day to day to supply the places of such eminent ministers as should be got. All this charge, besides paying a clerk, and a woman to look to the seats, rose high. Part of it the people paid, and the rest she paid herself.

"Hence God was pleased to remove us, but by the interposition of a marvellous deliverance. The roof of that market-house is a vast weight, and was ill contrived to lie much on one beam in the middle of the floor; the place being greatly crowded, the beam gave so great a crack as put all the people in fear. But a second crack set them all on running, and crying out at the windows for ladders. I having seen the like before, at Dunstan's, Fleet-street, while I was preaching, which occasioned the pulling down and new building of the church, reproved them sharply for their fears, and would have gone on to preach: but see the strange hand of God on her that set all the work on foot! After the first crack, she got down the stairs, through the crowd, where others could not get that were stronger. The first man she met, she asked him what profession he was of. He said, 'A carpenter.' Saith she, 'Can you suddenly put a prop under the

middle of this beam?' The man dwelt close by, had a meet prop ready, suddenly put it under, while all we above knew nothing of it; but the man's knocking increased the people's fears and cry. We were glad all to be gone; and, the next morning, took a skilful workman to take up the boards and search the beam, which we all saw had two such rents, so long and so wide, and the sound part left was so slender, that we took it for a wonder that the house fell not suddenly.

"But this fright increased my wife's diseased frightfulness, so that she never got off all the effects of it while she lived. The fear, and the marvellous deliverance, made her promise to God two things:— 1. To keep the anniversary memorial of it in public thanksgiving, which she did; and 2. To build a safer place, where they might meet with less fear. And it too deeply touched her mind to think that it was she that took the place, and brought them all thither. And, if eight hundred persons had been there buried in the ruins, as the papists were at Blackfriars, oh what a dreadful thing it would have been in the heavy loss, the many dolorous families, and the public scandal! These were too great thoughts to fall on a weak and too passionate nature.

"According to her promise she paid for that place, and presently set to seek and build another. And there was there no fit grounds near it to be had, but two, of which one was in Oxendon-street, which she could not have without giving £30. a year ground-rent, and to be at all the charge of building on it, and this but for a lease not very long. But she must do it, by promise and desire. She gets a friend to make the bargain, takes the ground, and begs money to build on it a chapel, which tempted us, by the ill advice of a friend, to take also the front ground to the street, and build two little houses on it, to our great loss, all her own money, and many times more, being laid out upon them, much against her inclination.

“ When that chapel was finished, I began, and preached there but one day, being to go, on the morrow, into the country. It unhappily fell out, that secretary Henry Coventry’s house was at the back of it, who resolved that it should not be used by us. The next Lord’s day, when I was far off, and left my wife at home, she got one Mr. Seddon, a Derbyshire stranger then come to town, to preach there; an humble pious man, that had suffered imprisonment formerly, by Cromwell’s party, for being for the king’s restoration at the rising of sir George Booth. Secretary Coventry, thinking I would be there, had got three justices with a warrant for me, to have apprehended me, and sent me to jail. But it fell on Mr. Seddon. But, because the warrant made for me was so altered, as to the name, that it suited not his case, after some time of imprisonment he had his *habeas corpus*, and, by the justice of worthy judge Hale and other judges, was delivered. But he was a tender man, and my wife, sensible that she was the occasion, which did her no good, and all the burden lay on her to maintain him, to visit and comfort him, to pay the lawyers, and discharge all fees, which, as I remember, cost her £20. And yet we were calumniated as if I, that was twenty miles off, had put another to suffer in my stead.

“ When she saw that we could not be suffered to preach in the place which, upon her promise, she had built, she was very glad that Dr. Lloyd, and the parishioners, accepted of it for their public worship, asking them no more rent than we were to pay for the ground, and the room over, for a vestry, at £5., and asking no advantage for all the money laid out on the building; yet, since, the purchase of the fee-simple of the chapel-ground hath cost me £200. more, and the adjoining ground £200. more, to my great loss.

“ So much was her heart set on the helping the ignorant untaught poor about St. James’s, that she

set up a school there to teach freely some poor children to read, and the catechism ; and thereby also relieved a poor honest man that taught them, who hath a wife and many children, and no other maintenance of his own. And she would fain have set up more, had she had money. For this she begged a while of her good friends, but they quickly gave over, and she paid him mostly of her own, six pounds a year, till her death.

“ When she saw that I could not use the chapel which she built, she presently hired another near, ready built for gain, in Swallow-street, that the poor people where I had begun, through God’s mercy, with considerable success, might still be taught ; and, when I had there a while continued, and was kept out by the officers standing at the door with the justice’s warrant many months together, it was her care and act to refer it to many good ministers, to choose one for the place who would be better endured by them that would not endure me ; and a faithful, painful, self-denying man was chosen, who hath there done much good, and still doth.

“ When I was thence driven, it was her choice that I should go quite to Southwark, each Lord’s day, to preach to a congregation of poor people there.

“ When Dr. Manton’s place, at Covent-garden, was void, it was her desire that I should preach once a day there, because, being near, many of the poor of St. James’s would come thither, as they did.

“ She got from her friends, also, money to help to build another very useful chapel for another, among a numerous poor people, where still much good is done. And she promoted two or three such more.

“ She was very impatient of public collections for the ministers, or for the rent of the place, because it sounded ill, and prejudiced the ignorant and covetous, and troubled the poor that had no money ; and, therefore. did the utmost she could with her own purse and

her friends to avoid it, knowing that rent must be paid, and ministers and their families must have bread; and it is a pity they should be under the cares of want.

“ She was so far from crossing me in my preaching freely without salary, or gathering a church that would maintain me, or making collections, or getting subscriptions, that she would not have endured any such thing if I had desired it. Though she knew that the labourer was worthy of his hire, and that God had ordained, that they that preach the gospel should live of the gospel; yet she knew that all must be done to the furtherance of the gospel, and to edifying; and was of Paul’s mind, who would rather die than any should make his glorying void, and deprive him of that reward. Therefore, it was so far from offending her, as it would be with many ministers’ wives that were in want, and might have such maintenance as is their due, that I neither conformed, nor took any place of gain, that it was as much by her will as my own, that for the first nine or ten years of my ejected state I took not so much as any private gift to supply my wants, except ten pounds a year from serjeant Fountaine, which his importunity, and my civility, would not permit me to refuse.

“ And I take it yet for a greater part of her self-denial and charity, that, when her own estate proved much too short to maintain her in the exercise of such good works as she was devoted to, she at length refused not to accept, with thanks, the liberality of others, and to live partly on charity, that she might exercise charity to them that could not so easily get it from others as we could do. And, accordingly, of latter years, divers faithful pious friends, no way related to us, or obliged by us, have been so free, kind, and liberal, that I have much ado to forbear here naming them, in expression of their bounty, and my thanks. And I must say of her, that once her pride

would not have stooped to be so much beholden, as to live on the charity of strangers.

“ When warrants were out to distrain my goods for fines for my preaching, she did, without any repining, encourage me to undergo the loss, and did herself take the trouble of removing and hiding my library awhile, many score being so lost, and after to give it away, *bona fide*, some to New England, and the most at home, to avoid distraining on them. And the danger of imprisonment, and paying £40. for every sermon, was so far from inclining her to hinder or discourage me from any one sermon, that, if she did but think I had the least fear, or self-saving by fleshly wisdom, in shrinking from my undertaken office work, it was so great a trouble to her, that she could not hide it.

“ She was exceedingly impatient with any nonconforming ministers that shrunk for fear of suffering, or that were over querulous and sensible of their wants or dangers; and would have no man be a minister that had not so much self-denial as to lay down all at the feet of Christ, and count no cost or suffering too dear to serve him. She greatly hated choosing, or using the sacred ministry for wealth, ease, or honour, or any worldly end, serving the flesh under the name of serving Christ, and looking to be revered and honoured in this taking of God’s name in vain.

“ Accordingly, after some years, wherein a larger course had been taken, she was against my persuading parents to devote their children to the ministry, that had but good wits and parts, and were not profane, though my success with some did much encourage me to it heretofore. But her sense of the sin and mischief of bad ministers, made her persuade all, that in that case she had to do with, to take heed of devoting their sons to the ministry, till they had good reason to judge them truly godly. And, as she would not have pious persons to marry such as were not pious, on pretence

of hopes that God would convert them, so much less would she have such hopes, that have no promise from God, pretended for devoting unsanctified lads to the sacred office. She saw how many, even of good men's children, profaned the ministry, and turned to any course that did but serve their worldly interest, that she was vehemently against addicting any to that office, that had not, besides good wits and parts, so great a love to God and souls, as to come to it with absolute self-denial, resolved to serve Christ at the dearest rates, and take his acceptance and the winning of souls for their benefice.

“ She was not willing to entice any into the way of the ministry, as a common trade to live by in the world; and would have had two or three reading, writing, and catechising schools set up instead of one grammar school. And she would not have parents make scholars of bad children, nor send them to the universities, lest, when they had a little wordy learning, they should make themselves ministers, whether their parents would or not; and so a swarm of such as had been a few years at the university should think a benefice their due, and take the charge of the souls of many, that never knew the worth of one, nor how it must be qualified and guided.

“ Her expectations of liberality to the poor from others were too high, and her displeasure too great towards them that denied her; whereupon, when she saw a worthy person in debt, or prison, or great want, she would promise to gather them such a sum, and sometimes she was put to pay most of it herself. But a fortnight or month before she died, she promised to get £20. towards the relief of one of known name and worth, and could get but £8. and somewhat over of it, and paid all the rest herself.

“ Her judgment was, that we ought to give, more or less, to every one that asketh, if we have it; and that neighbourhood, and notice, and asking, next to

known indigence and great worth, are the marks by which to know to whom God would have us give. I thought, that, besides these, we must exercise prudence in discerning the degrees of need and worth. But she practised as she thought, and especially to those imprisoned for debt, and blamed me if I denied any one.

“Alas! I know many poor widows, and others, who think they have now lost a mother, and are left desolate, whom I could wish some that are able would help, instead of the help which they have lost.

“She was much more liberal to many of my own poor kindred than I was. But her way was not to maintain them in idleness, but to take children, and set them to some trade, or help them out of some special straits.

“To her own kindred she bare a most tender love; but her care was most to get them to be good, and save their souls, and next to settle them well in the world.

“There are some things charged on her as faults, which I shall mention. 1. That she busied her head so much about churches, and works of charity, and was not content to live privately and quietly. But this is but just what profane unbelievers say against all zeal, and serious godliness: ‘What needs there all this ado?’ Doth not Paul call some women his helps in the gospel? He that knows what it is to do good, and makes it the business of his life in the world, and knows what it is to give account of our stewardship, and to be doomed as the unprofitable slothful servant, will know how to answer this accusation.

“Another accusation is, that she was wasteful and imprudent in leaving me so much in debt.

“To that I answer: 1. Let any one that reads what went before, consider what she did, and he will not wonder at her debts. It was not to pamper her own body; she used mean clothing, and a far meaner diet,

for her own person, I think much less than Cornaro's* and Lessius's proportion.

"2. And she went into no debt, but, by mortgage or otherwise, she gave the creditors good security for.

"3. But, I confess, she and I differed in this. I thought I was not to borrow to give, unless in some public and extraordinary case; she thought otherwise, that, while she could give security, she ought to borrow to relieve the poor, especially the most worthy. Nor did she draw upon us any debt, but what there was not only sufficient security for, but also a fair prospect of ourselves having a competency left, had it pleased God to lengthen her life; and I am far from fearing want myself.

"But so much for opening the course of her studies, labours, expenses, and, indeed, her delights."

V. Her mental qualifications and infirmities.

"I doubt not but some of these accusers will say, 'Why open you all this? Were not you the master? and do not you hereby praise yourself; or else confess that she was your governess?'

"Answer 1. Perhaps love and grief may make me speak more than many will think fit. But, though some passion blind the judgment, some doth but excite it to duty; and God made it to that end; and I will not be judged by any that never felt the like.

"2. Did not Christ say of Mary's box of ointment, that it should be remembered wherever that gospel was preached? And was it not Judas that said, 'What need this waste?' And were not the poor's

* He allowed himself only twelve ounces of food, and fourteen ounces of liquids each day, which became so habitual to him, that, when he was above seventy years of age, the experiment of adding two ounces to each had nearly proved fatal to him. At length the yolk of an egg became sufficient for a meal. He died, in 1566, at the advanced age of a hundred years.

clothing, made by Dorcas, showed to move Peter? The poor we have always with us. Do the covetous believe, that what we do to his people we do to Christ?

“ 3. It was not mine which she gave, but her own, that I am now mentioning, and what she procured.

“ 4. But I am not ashamed to have been much ruled by her prudent love in many things. And you will the less wonder when I have told you what she and I were.

“ For myself, my constant pains, and weakness, and ministerial labours, forbade me the care of outward things. I had never much known worldly cares. Before I was married I had no need; afterwards she took the care on her; and disuse had made it intolerable to me. I feel now more of it than ever I did, when yet I have so little a way to go.

“ And as for her, I speak the truth, her apprehension of such things was so much quicker, and more discerning than mine, that, though I was naturally somewhat tenacious of my own conceptions, her reasons and my experience usually told me, that she was in the right, and knew more than I. She would, at the first hearing, understand the matter better than I could do by many and long thoughts.

“ And the excellency of her reason lay not so much in the speculative, as the prudential practical part. I must say, that in this I never knew her equal. In very hard cases, about what was to be done, she would suddenly open all the way that was to be opened, in things of the family, estate, or any civil business. And, to confess the truth, experience acquainted her, that I knew less in such things than she, and therefore I was willing she should take it all upon her.

“ Yea, I will say that, which they that believe me to be no liar will wonder at, except in cases that require learning, and skill in theological difficulties, she was better at resolving a case of conscience than most divines that ever I knew in all my life. I often put

cases to her, which she suddenly so resolved, as to convince me of some degree of oversight in my own resolution. Inasmuch, that, of late years, I confess that I was used to put all, save secret cases, to her, and hear what she could say. Abundance of difficulties were brought me, some about restitution, some about injuries, some about references, some about vows, some about marriage promises, and many such like; and she would lay all the circumstances presently together, compare them, and give me a more exact resolution than I could do.

“As to religion, we were so perfectly of one mind, that I know not that she differed from me in any one point, or scarce a circumstance, except in the prudential management of what we were agreed in. She was for universal love of all true christians, and against appropriating the church to a party, and against censoriousness and partiality in religion; she was for acknowledging all that is of God in conformists and nonconformists. But she had much more reverence for the elder conformists than for most of the young ones, who ventured upon things which dissenters had so much to say against, without weighing, or understanding the reasons on both sides, merely following others for worldly ends, without a tender fear of sinning; especially if any young men of her own friends were inclined merely to swim with the stream, without due trial of the case, it greatly displeased her and she thought hardly of them.

“She had, in her youth, been tempted to doubt of the life to come, and of the truth of the scripture. But she was so fully resolved and settled herein, that her confident assurance of it was the life of all her life and practice.

“After all the doubts of her sincerity and salvation, and all the fears and sadness thereupon, which cast her into melancholy, she so far overcame them all, that, for nearly these nineteen years that I have lived

with her, I think I never heard her thrice speak a doubting word of her salvation, but often of her hopeful persuasions that we should live together in heaven. It being my judgment, and constant practice, to make those that I teach understand that the gospel is glad tidings of great joy, and that holiness lies especially in delighting in God, his word, and works, and in his joyful praise, and hopes of glory, and longing for, and seeking the heavenly Jerusalem, and living as fruitfully to the church and others as we can do in the world; and that this must be wrought by the most believing apprehensions of God's goodness, as equal to his greatness, and of his great love to mankind manifested in our redemption, and by believing the grace and riches of Christ, and the comforting office of the Holy Ghost, and studying daily God's promises and mercies, and our everlasting joys; and that religion consists in doing God's commanding will, and quietly and joyfully trusting and resting in his promising and disposing will; and that fear and sorrow are but to remove impediments, and further all this. By degrees, she drunk in this doctrine, and so fully consented to it, that, though timorousness was her disease, her judgment was quieted and settled herein.

"The nature of true religion, holiness, obedience, and all duty to God and man, was printed in her conceptions, in so distinct and clear a character, as made her endeavours and expectations still look at greater exactness than I, and such as I, could reach. She was very desirous that we should all have lived in a constancy of devotion, and a blameless innocency. And, in this respect, she was the meekest helper that I could have had in the world, that ever I was acquainted with; for I was apt to be over careless in my speech, and too backward to my duty; and she was still endeavouring to bring me to a greater wariness and strictness in both. If I spake rashly or sharply it

offended her. If I carried it, as I was apt, with too much neglect of ceremony, or humble compliment to any, she would modestly tell me of it. If my very looks seemed not pleasant, she would have had me amend them, which my weak pained state of body indisposed me to do. If I forgot any week to catechise my servants, and familiarly instruct them personally, besides my ordinary family duties, she was troubled at my remissness. And whereas, of late years, my decay of spirits, and diseased heaviness and pain, made me much more seldom and cold in profitable conference and discourse in my house than I had been when I was younger, and had more ease, and spirits, and natural vigour, she much blamed me, and was troubled at it, as a wrong to herself and others. Though yet her judgment agreed with mine, that too much and often table-talk of the best things, doth but tend to dull the common hearers, and harden them under it as a customary thing; and that too much good talk may bring it into contempt, or make it ineffectual.

“And, of late years, my constant weakness and pain made me unable to speak much in my ordinary course of duty; and my writings, preachings, and other public duty, which I ever thought I was bound to prefer before lesser, did so wholly take up those few hours of the day which I had out of my bed, that I was seldomer in secret prayer with my wife than she desired.

“Indeed, it troubleth me to think how often I told her, that I never understood Solomon’s words, Eccles. vii. 16, but by the exposition of her case: ‘Be not righteous over-much, neither make thyself over-wise: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?’ I doubt not but Solomon spake of human civil righteousness and wisdom, as a means respecting temporal prosperity or adversity, rather than spiritual, holy righteousness,

respecting God's everlasting reward. Or, if it were extended to religious righteousness, it can be but against superstition, falsely called righteousness.

"1. She set her head and heart so intensely upon doing good, that her head and body would hardly bear it. As holy set meditation is no duty to a melancholy person, that cannot do it without confusion and danger of distraction, so many other duties are no duties, when they will do more harm than good. 2. And a man is limited in his capacity and his time. No man can do all the good he would; and, to omit a greater for the better doing of a lesser, or to omit the substance of the one for exacter doing of another, I thought was to be unrighteous by being righteous over-much. She, and some others, thought I had done better to have written fewer books, and to have done those few better. I thought, while I wrote none needlessly, the imperfection of two was a less evil than the total omission of one. She thought I should have spent more time in religious exercises with her, my family, and my neighbours, though I had written less. I thought there were many to do such work, who would not do mine; and that I chose the greatest, which I durst not omit; and could not do both in the measure that I desired else to have done.

"As she saith (before cited) herself, that if she was but in a condition, in which God's service was costly to her, it would make her know whether she were sincere or not; so she had her wish, and proved her sincerity by her costliest obedience. It cost her not only her labour and estate, but somewhat of her trouble of body and mind; for her knife was too keen, and cut the sheath. Her desires were more earnestly set on doing good, than her tender mind and head could well bear; for, indeed, her great infirmity was the four passions of love, desire, fear, and trouble of mind. Anger she either had very little, next to none, or little made it known. She rarely ever spake in an angry manner.

She could not well bear to hear one speak loud, or hastily, or eagerly, or angrily, even to those that deserved it. My temper in this she blamed, as too quick and earnest. When her servants did any fault unwillingly, she scarcely ever told them of it. When one lost ten pounds worth of linen in carriage carelessly, and another ten pounds worth of plate by negligence, she showed no anger at any such thing. If servants had done amiss, and we could not prove it, or knew not which did it, she would never ask them herself, nor suffer others, lest it should tempt them to hide it by a lie, unless it were a servant that feared God, and would not lie.

“ I took her deep and long sense of the faults of over-loved and obliged persons, to be one of her greatest faults. But no one was ever readier to forgive a fault confessed, or which weakness and religious differences caused. I will give but one instance. The good woman, of whom she used to hire the rooms over St. James's market-house, was greatly against the common-prayer, and first made my wife feel whether I meant to use it, before she would take it. I told her I intended not to use it, but would not promise her. Upon that my wife told her that I would not. After this, I caused the reader to read the psalms, chapters, creed, decalogue, and I used the Lord's prayer; and I openly told them, that we met not as a separated distinct church, but, for the time, to supply the notorious necessities of the people, and as helpers of the allowed ministry. The good woman thought this had been reading the common-prayer, and, in a letter which I now find, accused my wife with five or six vehement charges, for telling her I would not read the common prayer. My wife was of my mind for the matter, but greatly offended with me for seeming to do it for the avoiding of danger; and was so far from not pardoning these false smart accusations, that she never once blamed the good woman. but loved her tenderly,

and relieved her in sickness to the death, but hardly forgave me; and yet drew me from all other places, if the ministers were not of my mind, by prudent diversity.

“ Much less did her sufferings from the times dis-temper her. She hath blamed me for naming in print my losses, imprisonment, and other sufferings by the bishops, as being over selfish querulousness, when I should rather with wonder be thankful for the great mercy we yet enjoyed; though I think I never mentioned them as over-sensible of the sufferings, but as a necessary evincing of the nature of the cause, and as part of the necessary history, or matter of fact, in order to decide it. She as much disliked the silencing of the ministers as any, but she did not love to hear it much complained of, save as the public loss; nor to hear conformists talked against as a party, nor the faults of the conscientious sort of them aggravated in a siding factious manner.

“ But 1. She was prone to over-love her relations, and those good people, poor as much as rich, whom she thought most upright. The love was good, but the degree was too passionate.

“ 2. She over-earnestly desired their spiritual welfare. If these, whom she over-loved, had not been as good, and done as well as she would have them, in innocent behaviour, in piety, and, if rich, in liberality, it over-troubled her, and she could not bear it.

“ 3. She was apt, when she set her mind and heart upon some good work which she counted great, or the welfare of some dear friend, to be too much pleased in her expectations and self-made promises of the success; and then almost overturned with trouble when they disappointed her. And she too impatiently bore unkindnesses from the friends that were most dear to her, or whom she had much obliged. Her will was set upon good, but her weakness could not bear the crossing or frustration of it.

“ But the great infirmity which tyrannized over her was a diseased fearfulness, against which she had little more free will or power, than a man in an ague or frost against shaking cold. Her nature was prone to it; and, I said before, abundance of sad accidents made that and trouble of mind her malady. Besides, as she said, four times in danger of death. 2. And the storming of her mother's house by soldiers, firing part, killing, plundering, and threatening the rest. 3. The awakenings of her conversion. 4. The sentence of death by sickness presently, before her peace was settled. 5. The fire next her lodgings in Sweeting's-alley. 6. The burning of a merchant, his wife, and family, in Lothbury, over against her brother Upton's door. 7. The common terror and confusion at Dunstan's church, in Fleet-street, when they thought the church was falling on their heads while I was preaching, and the people cast themselves down from the galleries. 8. Her mother's death. 9. The friendless state she thought she was then left in. 10. The great plague. 11. The burning of London. 12. The crack and danger of her chamber in Aldersgate-street. 13. The crack and confusion in St. James's market-house. 14. The many fires and talk of firing since. 15. The common rumours of murderings and massacres. 16. The death and dangers of many of her friends, and my own illness. More than all these concurred to make fear and aptness to be troubled, to be her disease; so that she much dreamed of fire and murderers; and her own dreams worked half as dangerously on her as realities, so that she could not bear the clapping of a door, or any thing that had suddenness, noise, or fierceness in it. But all this was more the malady of her body than of her soul; and, I accounted, had little moral guilt; and I took it for an evidence of the power of grace, that so timorous a person, 1. Had overcome most of her fears of hell and God's desertion. 2. And was more fearless of persecution, imprisonment, or

losses and poverty thereby, than I, or any that I remember to have known.

“ And though her spirits were so quick, and she so apt to be troubled at men’s sin whom she much loved, she greatly differed from me in her bearing with them, and carriage towards them. My temper and judgment much led me to use my dependents, servants, and friends, according to the rules of church discipline; and, if they heard not loving, private admonitions once, twice, and thrice, to speak to them more sharply, and then before others, and to turn them off if yet they would not amend. But her way was, to oblige them by all the love, kindness, and bounty that she was able, and to bear with them, year after year, while there was hope, and at last not to desert them, but still use them so as she thought was most likely at least to keep them in a state of hope from the badness which displeasure might cause. I could not have borne with a son, I think, as she could do where her kindness was at her own choice; and yet she more disliked the least fault than I did, and was more desirous of their greatest innocency and exactness.

“ Indeed she was so much for calmness, deliberation, and doing nothing rashly and in haste, and my condition and business, as well as temper made me do and speak much so suddenly, that she principally differed from me, and blamed me in this. Every considerable case and business she would have me take time to think much of before I did it, or speak, or resolved of any thing. I knew the counsel was good for one that could stay, but not for one that must ride post. I thought still I had but a little time to live; I thought some considerable work still called for haste. I have, these forty years, been sensible of the sin of losing time. I could not spare an hour. I thought I could understand the matters in question as well at a few thoughts as in many days; and yet she, that had less work and more leisure, but a far quicker

apprehension than mine, was all for staying to consider, and against haste and eagerness in almost every thing; and, notwithstanding her over-quick and feeling temper, was all for mildness, calmness, gentleness, pleasingness, and serenity.

"She had an earnest desire for the conversion and salvation of her servants, and was greatly troubled that so many of them, though tolerable in their work, went away ignorant, or strange to true godliness, as they came. And such as were truly converted with us she loved as children.

"One infirmity made her faulty in the omission of much of her duty: she was wont to say, that she had from her childhood imprinted a deep fear and hatred of hypocrisy on her mind, that she could never do the outside of her duty, as to the speaking part, for fear of hypocrisy: I scarcely ever met with a person that was more able to speak long, for matter and good language, without repetitions, even about religious things; and few that had more desire that it were well done; and yet she could not do it herself for fear of seeming to be guilty of ostentation. In good company she would speak little of that which she most desired to hear. When I was at any time from home, she would not pray in the family, though she could not endure to be without it. She would privately talk to the servants, and read good books to them. Most of the open speaking part of religion she omitted, through a diseased enmity to ostentation and hypocrisy. But of late years, when she saw me and others too sparing in profitable speech to young and ignorant people, she confessed that she saw her error, and that even a hypocrite, using but the words and outside of religion, was better to others than silence and unprofitable omission was.

"Her household affairs she ordered with such great skill and decency, as that others much praised that which I was no fit judge of.

"Her great tender impatience lay much in her ears.

she could not bear, without great reason, a disputing contradiction, nor yet to hear sad tidings, nor any hard prognostic; and it was because she felt the weakness of her own head, and for twenty years lived in too great fears of the overthrow of her understanding. And I was apt to think it was but a passionate fanciful fear, and was too apt to be impatient with her impatience, and with every trouble of her mind, not enough considering how great tenderness in all our discourse she needed; though I remember nothing else that ever I showed impatience to her in: but ever since her first danger, and strong affection, I could hardly bear any signification of her displeasure and discontent. And she was wont often to say, 'It is a great mercy of God not to know what will befall us in this world, nor how we shall be sick, or suffer, or die, that our fore-knowledge may not anticipate our sorrows, though in the general we should be always ready.'

"She was the greatest honourer of her mother, and most sincerely loved her, that ever I knew a child do to a parent. She believed the promise of the fifth commandment, and believed that it did imply an answerable curse to them that broke it. And that as honouring parents hath even the promise of blessings on earth, so the dishonouring them is likely to bring a curse upon the person, or family, that is guilty of it. And that how great soever their present prosperity may seem, it is coming and will overtake them, either in their bodies, children, or estates. 'The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it,' Prov. xxx. 17: and such, by Moses's law, were to be put to death. 'Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother; and let all the people say, Amen,' Deut. xxvii. 16. And will God suspend it till the sinner saith, amen? O no. And what is that person's case that liveth under this curse of God? If the body escape it, and posterity escape it,

and the estate escape it, yea, and a seared conscience escape it a few years, the soul will not escape it for ever, without deep and thorough repentance ; for Christ hath redeemed none but sincere penitents from the curse : yea, even such seldom escape the temporal sharp chastisement.

“ And very worthy was her mother of her love and honour. All her letters to her when she was from home, I find now laid up by her as a treasure: I will transcribe part of one of them, that you may perceive her plain and honest care of her children’s souls.

“ In one, 1657, to this daughter at Oxford, she writes thus:—

“ “ I cannot but put you in mind of your duty you owe to God ; I mean, that you see that you lose not your time: if you be where you may improve your time for grace, and getting down sin, I shall give you my consent for your stay, (with her brother Upton, canon of Christ church.) But be sure you do not deceive yourself herein, for God will not be mocked : he that doth righteously and liveth to Christ, shall enjoy all the blessings promised by God to them that trust him, and obey him. I bless my God, I have my health as well as I can wish ; and my heart runs out wholly to God, in seeking a blessing for children, and children’s children. O that I may prevail by prayer to see such hopes of you all, upon good grounds, as will be a gracious return to my prayers. This is my work. Be not you wanting to yourselves, your endeavours and prayers also are necessary. Who knows but God will give you that one thing necessary, which if you shall make it your chief choice, shall never be taken from you? Let the word of God dwell plentifully in you, that it may be the rule of your life, which is the prayer of your truly loving mother, MARY HANMER.

“ That you may see what it was that I thought she most desired, and what she herself most valued, I will

here add one of my letters to her, not venturing to trouble such with more, as are affected little with any matters but their own, which is the case of most. I recite this rather than others, partly also as an act of repentance for those failings of her just expectations, by the neglect of such helps as I should have given her, which I had here mentioned. For though she often said, that before she married me she expected more sourness and unsuitableness than she found, yet I am sure that she found less zeal, and holiness, and strictness in all words, and looks, and duties, and less help for her soul than she expected. And her temper was to aggravate a fault much more in her nearest and dearest friends than in any others, and to be far more troubled at them. But this use she made of my too cold and careless converse, and of all my impatience with her impatience, and of all my hasty words, that she that had long thought she had no grace, because she reached not higher than almost any reach on earth, and because she had many passions and infirmities, perceived by me and many other esteemed teachers, that we were all as bad as she; and therefore grace doth stand with more faultiness than she had imagined, and that all our teaching much excelled the frame of our souls and lives, and was much more worthy to be followed; and therefore that God would also pardon such failings as her own.

“Though I have received none from you, but one by Mr. H., I will not be avenged on you by the like. I have nothing of news or business to communicate, but to tell you, that we are all here yet as well as you left us, excepting what your absence causeth. And yet I must confess, I find that it is easier to be often speaking to God, when I have nobody else to speak to, than when there are other competitors, expectants, or interpellators.* Just as I can more easily now fill my

* Persons interrupting.

paper to thee, with some speech of God, when I have nothing else to put into it, than I can when many other matters are craving every one a place. It is our shame that the love and glory of God doth not silence every other suitor, and even in the midst of crowds and business take us up, and press every creature and occasion for their service. But while we are weak, and compassed with flesh, we must not only consider what we *should* do, but what we *can* do. It is our great fault that we are not more skilful and faithful in helping one another, that we might miss each other on better reasons, than merely from the inclinations of love. I hope God will make us better hereafter, that when we are asunder, each of us may say, I miss the help for watchfulness and heavenliness, for true love and thankfulness to God, which I was wont to have. But oh, what an enemy is a naughty heart! which maketh us unable for our duty alone, and makes us need the help of others, and yet will not suffer us to use it when we have it. When we are alone, it maketh us impediments to ourselves, and when we are in company it maketh us impediments to others. Yet is there none, no, not the weakest of christians, but there is much in them that we might improve. But we are so bad and backward at it, that Satan too commonly hath his end, in making us unprofitable to each other. If a good horse, or a good house, be a valuable mercy, how much more is a good friend. But art and industry are necessary to the improvement. And no wonder when we fetch not the help and comfort which we might have from God, from Christ himself, from heaven, from scripture, for want of improving skill and industry. Oh how easy is it, when our friends are taken from us, to say, Thus, and thus I might, and should have used them, rather than so to use them while we have them! I hope God will help me to make some better use of thee while we are together: and at a distance, O let not a hearty request to God for each other, be any day

wanting. Dear heart, the time of our mutual help is short, O let us use it accordingly ; but the time of our reaping the fruit of this, and all holy endeavours, and preparatory mercies, will be endless. Yet a little while, and we shall be both with Christ. He is willing respecting us, and I hope we are willing concerning him, and of his grace, though the flesh be weak. I am absent, but God is still with you, your daily Guide and Keeper; and I hope you will labour to make him your daily Comfort. And now you have none to divert and hinder you, to say, 'When I awake, I am still with thee.' And when you are up, 'I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.' And when thoughts crowd in, 'In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.' And when thoughts would trouble and perplex you, 'My meditation of Him shall be sweet, and I will delight in the Lord.' And when your wants and duty call you to him, 'It is good for me to draw nigh to God.'

"All other comforts will be, as the things are which we take comfort in; that is, helpful if the things be helpful, and used but as helps: hurtful if the things be hurtful, or hurtfully used; vain if the things be vain; short if the things be transitory; and durable if the things are durable to us. And this is the chief comfort which you and I must have in one another, that is, as helpful towards God, and as our converse with him will be durable. The Lord forgive my great unprofitableness, and the sin that brought me under any disabilities to answer your earnest and honest desires of greater helps than I afford you, and help me yet to amend it towards you. But though my soul be faulty and dull, and my strength of nature fail, be sure that He will be a thousand-fold better to thee, even here, than such crooked, feeble, useless things, as is

"Thy R. B."

"*From Hampden.*"

VI. *Her bodily infirmities, and death.*

“ Her diseased frightfulness, and many former sicknesses, I have mentioned before. A great pain of the head held her from her youth, two or three days every fortnight, or little more; and upon every thing that did irritate the matter, she had a constant straitness in the lungs, a great incapacity of much exercise, motion, or any heating thing. Ever since her sickness, 1659, she hath lived in an ill-conceited fear of distraction, which greatly hurt her. It was because she had an aunt long so diseased, and her parents were naturally passionate, and her spirits over-quick, and her blood thin and mobile; and though wisdom hid it from others in her converse, she felt the trouble of her own mind in things, as aforesaid, that much displeased her; and so lived in a constant fear, which tended to have brought on her what she feared. But her understanding was so far from failing, that it was higher and clearer than other people's; but, like the treble strings of a lute, strained up to the highest, sweet, but in continual danger.

“ The many and weekly rumours of plots, firings, massacres, &c. much increased this fear, as is aforesaid; and the death of very many neighbours, young, strong, and excellent christians, of greatest use, and many near friends, did greatly add to her sadness and expectations of death. But little of this was seen to any; she purposely carried it pleasantly, and as merrily to others, when she was troubled.”

“ She was subject to various afflictions, and suffered much through fear of cancer. At length, about ten weeks before her fatal sickness, she had a severe attack of strangury; and, with the hope of cure, drank the Barnet waters for several days. They proved injurious rather than beneficial. She took, moreover, ‘the tincture of amber,’ which, together with the waters, ‘worked too powerfully on her brain, and suddenly

cast her into strong disturbance and delirium; in which, though the physicians, with great kindness and care, did omit nothing in their power, she died the 12th day: she fell sick on Friday, June 3, 1681, and died June 14, at the age of forty-two years.

"Though her understanding never perfectly returned, she had a very strong remembrance of the affecting passages of her life, from her childhood. Mrs. Corbet, (whom she dearly loved, and had newly got into the house to be her companion,) with others, standing by, she cried out to me, 'My mother is in heaven, and Mr. Corbet is in heaven, and thou and I shall be in heaven.' And even in her last weakness she was persuaded of her salvation.

"She often showed us, that her soul did work towards God, crying out, (complaining of her head,) 'Lord make me know what I have done, for which I undergo all this. Lord, I submit; God chooseth best for me.' She desired me to pray by her, and seemed quietly to join to the end. She heard divers psalms, and a chapter read, and repeated part, and sung part of a psalm herself. The last words that she spoke were, 'My God, help me; Lord, have mercy upon me.'

"God had been so many years training her up under the expectations and preparations for death, as made the case of her soul less grievous to me, as no way doubting of her salvation; and knowing that a distracting fever, or a frenzy, or an inflammation, or disturbance of the animal spirits, or brain, or an imposthume may befall the best as soon as the worst. I thank God that she was never under any melancholy, which tempted her to any of those doleful evils, which many score, I think, that have been with me, of several ways of education, have been sadly tempted to. She near nineteen years lived with me a cheerful, wise, and very useful life, in constant love, and peace, and concord, except our differing opinions about trivial occurrences, or our disputing or differing mode of talk.

"She was buried on June 17, in Christ-church, in the ruins, in her own mother's grave. The grave was the highest, next the old altar, or table in the chancel, on which this her daughter had caused a very fair, rich, large marble stone to be laid, anno 1661, about twenty years ago; on which I caused to be written her titles, and some Latin verses, and these English ones:

"Thus must thy flesh to silent dust descend,
 Thy mirth and worldly pleasure thus will end:
 Then happy holy souls; but wo to those
 Who heaven forgot, and earthly pleasures chose:
 Hear now this preaching grave without delay,
 Believe, repent, and work while it is day."

"But Christ's church on earth is liable to those changes of which the Jerusalem above is in no danger. In the doleful flames of London, 1666, the fall of the church broke this great marble all to pieces, and it proved no lasting monument; and I hope this paper monument, erected by one that is following, even at the door, in some passion indeed of love and grief, but in sincerity of truth, will be more publicly useful and durable than that marble stone was."

VII. *Some uses proposed to the reader from this history, and the reasons why I wrote it.*

"1. It may help to convince those that are inclined to sadduceeism, or infidelity, and believe not the testimony of the sanctifying Spirit to the truth of the word of God, but take holiness, as it differs from heathen morality, to be but fancy, hypocrisy, custom, or self-conceit: a man that never felt the working of God's special grace on his own heart, is hardly brought to believe that others have that which he never had himself. And this turneth usually to diabolical malignity, inclining them to hate those, and revile or despise them as deluded proud fanatic hypocrites, who pretend to be any better than they are, or to have that which they take to be but a conceit: all their religious thoughts

they take for the dreams of crazed, or proud persons; and their holy discourse, and prayers, but for canting, or vain babbling. But acquaintance, if intimate with gracious persons, might convince them of their mortal error; and true history, methinks, may do much towards it.

"2. I confess, with thanks to God, that having these forty years found that all our holiness and comfort depends upon our certain persuasion of the life of retribution following, and that our certainty of this depends upon our certain belief of the holy scriptures; and we being here in the dark, and too apt to doubt of all that we see not, there are several sensible, or experienced present certainties, which have been a great succour to my faith, to save me from temptations to unbelief and doubting, and to confirm my assurance that the scripture is God's word.

"In that I undoubtedly see and hear, that through all the world there is just such a depravity in human nature, as the scripture describeth for original sin; which cannot be the state of man's integrity, when his reason is much convinced of much of the duty to God, man, and himself, which he will not do, and of most of the great sins which he will not forsake.

"I see the scripture clearly verified in mentioning the common enmity and war between the serpent's and the holy seed; it is notorious through the world, in all ages and countries, an enmity which no relation or interest reconcileth.

"I feel and see the scripture verified, which describeth all the temptations of Satan, and the secret war within us between the spirit and the flesh.

"And I feel and see the scripture fulfilled, which promiseth a blessing on God's word, and his ordinances.

"And I feel and see the scripture fulfilled, which describeth the renewing work of the Holy Ghost, and the spiritual difference of the sanctified from all others.

This is not only in myself, but in others, (oh how many hundred holy persons have I known,) the witness of Christ's truth and power; and as Joshua's and Caleb's bunch of grapes, to assure me of the land of promise, and God's truth, which I see fulfilled in them. Can I doubt of holiness when I feel it, and see it in the effects?

"Even as it persuadeth me the more easily to believe that there are devils, when I see their very nature, and works, in devils incarnate, and see what a kingdom he plainly ruleth in the world; and to believe that there is a hell when I see so much of hell on earth.

"3. It may teach us that the state of godliness is not to be judged of by the fears and sorrows in which it usually begins: a man's life is not like his infancy at his birth. The fears and penitent sorrows which foolish fleshly sinners fly from, do tend to everlasting peace and joy: and perfect love will cast out all tormenting fears, unless it be those of a timorous diseased temper, which have more of sickness than of sin, and will be laid aside with the body, which was their cause. A life of peace and joy on earth may succeed the tremblings of the new-born convert; but a life of full everlasting joy will certainly succeed the perseverance and victory of every believing holy soul."

"Though God usually begin our conversion in fears and penitent sorrows, it is holy and heavenly joy which it tendeth to, as more desirable; and we should chiefly seek, and should labour to moderate fear and sorrow, and not think we can never have enough. It is too common an error with honest souls, to think that a hard heart lieth most in want of sorrow and tears, whereas it lieth most in want of a tractable compliance, and yielding to the commands and will of God, and in an iron neck, and obstinate disobedience to God; and to think that a new and tender heart is principally a heart that can weep and mourn, when it is chiefly a

heart that easily receiveth all the impressions of God's commands, and promises, and threats, and easily yieldeth to his known will.

"4. And this may greatly warn us to fear and avoid self-willedness: I mean a will of our own that runs before the will of God, and is too much set on any thing which God hath not promised; and knows not how to bear a frustration or denial, but saith as Rachel, 'Give it me, or I die.' We must learn to follow, and not to lead, and to say, 'The will of the Lord be done; not mine, Lord, but thine;' and in every estate to be content. There is no rest but in God's will.

"Yet this tells us, that God dealeth better with his weak servants than they deserve, and turneth that oftentimes to their good, which they deserved should have been their greatest suffering.

"5. This history, and my great experience, saith, that 'there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother,' Prov. xviii. 24; and that it was God's Spirit that said, 'Thy own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not: neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity; for better is a neighbour that is near, than a brother that is far off,' Prov. xxvii. 10.

"6. This history tells us how great a mercy it is to have a body meet to serve the soul, and how great an affliction to have an unruly inclination from the body's temper; and what a tyrant excessive fear is, and how great a blessing it is to have such a passion as faith can rule, and easily quiet.

"7. And it tells you, that our greatest good or evil is nearest us. Next God, the best is in our souls, and there is the worst; and next in our bodies, and next in our nearest friends. And it may teach all to expect their greatest sorrows from those, or that which they most excessively love, and from whom they have the highest expectations: only God cannot be loved more than he deserveth. Sorrow beginneth in inordinate love, and joy in good.

"8. And it tells us, that God's service lieth more in deeds than in words. My dear wife was faulty indeed in talking so little of religion in company, except it were irresistibly to confute in few words an opposer, or reviler of religion. But her religion lay in doing more than talk.

"Yet her example tells us, that it is one of Satan's wiles to draw us to one sin to avoid another; and to make us think that nothing is a due that hath great inconveniences, or which we can foresee some men will receive hurt from; and so to be unrighteous by being righteous over-much, and leave much undone for fear of doing it amiss. By which rule we should scarcely ever do any thing that God commands; 'He that observeth the winds shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap,' Eccles. xi. 4. I speak this on her, at last confessed, error, of omitting seasonable speech and duty, to avoid hypocrisy and ostentation, which my great friend, judge Hale, was just so guilty of, as I know, and the writers of his life confess; he would make no great show of zeal in religion, lest if he did any thing amiss, religion should be reproached for his sake. Cardinal Richlieu was wont to say, (as is written of him,) that he hated no counsellor more than those that were always saying, 'Let us do it better,' by that hindering the doing of much at all.

"9. You see here, that suitableness in religious judgment and disposition preserveth faster love and concord, as it did with us, than suitableness in age, education, and wealth; but yet those should not be imprudently neglected. Nothing causeth so near, and fast, and comfortable an union, as to be united in one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one faith, one church, one hope of heavenly glory; yet accidental unsuitableness should be avoided as far as may be.

"10. It tells you, also, how manifold temptations and afflictions God's servants are liable to in this life.

"It is not God's, or our enemies, afflicting us in

worldly losses or sufferings, especially when we suffer for righteousness' sake, which is half so painful, as our own inward infirmities. A man's spirit can bear his infirmities of outward crosses; but a wounded spirit, who can bear? My poor wife made nothing of prisons, distrainings, reproaches, and such crosses; but her burden was most inward, from her own tenderness, and next from those whom she over-loved. And for mine own part, all that either enemies or friends have ever done against me, is but a trifle to me, in comparison of the daily burden of a pained body, and the weakness of my soul in faith, hope, love, and heavenly desires and delights.

"11. And here you may see, how necessary patience is, and to have a mind fortified before-hand against all sorts of sufferings, that in our patience we may possess our souls. And that the dearest friends must expect to find much in one another that must be borne with, and exercise our patience: we are all imperfect. Even husband and wife, master and servants, have almost daily differences in judging of their common affairs.

"12. By this history you may see, how little cause we have to be over serious about any worldly matters, and to mind and do them with too much intenseness of affection; and how necessary it is to possess them as if we possessed them not, seeing the time is short, and the fashion of this world passeth away. And how reasonable it is, that if we love God, ourselves, yea, or our friends, that we should long to be with Christ, where they are far more amiable than here, and where in the city of God, the Jerusalem above, we shall delightfully dwell with them for ever: whereas here we were still sure to stay with them but a little while. And had we here known Christ after the flesh, we should so know him no more: whereas believing that we shall soon be with him, even those that never saw him, may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

“13. Lastly, here you may see, that as God’s servants have not their portion or good things in this life, so they may have the same sicknesses and manner of death as others: Lazarus may lie and die in his sores, among the dogs at the door, when Dives may have a pompous life and funeral. There is no judging of a man’s sincerity, or of his future state, by his disease, or by his diseased death-bed words: he that liveth to God, shall die safely into the hand of God, though a fever or delirium hinder him from knowing this, till experience and sudden possession of heaven convince him. ‘Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them,’ Rev. xiv. 13. Therefore in our greatest straits and sufferings, let us comfort one another with these words, ‘That we shall for ever be with the Lord.’ Had I been to possess the company of my friends in this life only, how short would our comfortable converse have been! But now I shall live with them in the heavenly city of God for ever. And they being there of the same mind with my forgiving God and Saviour, will forgive all my failings, neglects, and injuries, as God forgiveth them and me. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: and he hath but taken away that upon my desert, which he had given me undeservedly nearly nineteen years. Blessed be the name of the Lord. I am waiting to be next: the door is open. Death will quickly draw the veil, and make us see how near we were to God and one another, and did not sufficiently know it. Farewell, vain world! and welcome true everlasting life.”
